



Are You Digging for Information About Hanford Site Cleanup?

Will cleanup be effective? Are technologies available to deal with the variety of chemical and radioactive contaminants in aging underground storage tanks? Do we remove tanks completely, or leave them in the ground? How do we keep contaminated groundwater from reaching the Columbia River? How clean is “clean?” What is the future of this vast tract of land?

The Hanford Site in Southeastern Washington State has some of the most dangerous pollution on earth. Efforts to clean up contaminated soil and water on the 586-square-mile former defense production site are moving forward. Construction has begun on the vitrification plant, and a draft groundwater strategy developed. Significant progress has been made yet burning questions and pivotal decisions remain.

The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology), U.S. Department of Energy (USDOE), and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), collectively known as the Tri-Party Agencies, want to hear from you at this year’s second annual State of the Hanford Site public meetings. Are we on the right track?

Last year, more than two hundred people from around the Northwest addressed Hanford decision-makers about current Hanford cleanup issues. One of the biggest concerns expressed at those meetings was the lack of a credible plan of attack for dealing with Hanford’s more than 90 square miles of contaminated groundwater plumes.

Due in part to citizen input, USDOE and the regulatory agencies have developed a new strategy for dealing with groundwater plumes in an effort to stop them from spreading further or reaching the Columbia River.

So far, Hanford has hung on to its cleanup budget for fiscal year ’02-’03. However, the future is somewhat gray. Upcoming changes in Congress, and talk of possible war with Iraq, may compete for limited dollars, making *your* participation more important than ever!

New issues of concern to stakeholders involve the acceptance of more waste from out of state, efforts to define waste tank closure, demonstration of specific tank waste retrieval technology, and possible changes to the plan to vitrify all tank waste.

Come learn more about the Hanford Cleanup and how it affects the Pacific Northwest and the Columbia River. Share your concerns.

Each Wednesday in January, Hanford decision-makers will be available at our State of the Site public meetings. The first meeting is January 8th, 2003 at Seattle’s Woodland Park Zoo auditorium. Meetings will be offered in Oregon on the 15th, at the Best Western Inn Hood River, and the 22nd at the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry in Portland. The final meeting will be held January 29th in the Tri-Cities in Kennewick, WA, at the Benton PUD auditorium. Each meeting will begin at 6:30 with an open house, and start at 7:00 at which time you’ll have opportunities to speak to Hanford decision-makers. Your opinion does count! We hope you’ll attend.

Call the Hanford Information Line at 800-321-2008 for more information.

